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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/781,101	02/17/2004	Naoya Takeuchi	51971/DBP/A400	3388
23363	7590	08/08/2007	EXAMINER	
CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP			DESIRE, GREGORY M	
PO BOX 7068			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
PASADENA, CA 91109-7068			2624	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			08/08/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/781,101	TAKEUCHI, NAOYA
Examiner	Art Unit	
Gregory M. Desire	2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 15-17 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1,2,4,5,8,9,11 and 12 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 3,6,7,10,13 and 14 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 17 February 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/17/04 & 4/20/07.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 8-9 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Onishi (7,113,629).

Regarding claims 1, 4, 8 and 11 Onishi discloses,

Capturing images, by scanning an object to be inspected on which a plurality of identical patterns is arranged, of the plurality of the patterns (note col. 4 lines 61-64 and fig. 2 and col. 5 lines 2-3, camera captures patterns on chips, wherein fig. 2 blocks 133-134 show plurality of identical patterns);

Detecting the positional information of the images of neighboring identical patterns (note col. 6 lines 34-40)

Determining the quantity of correction, by which the positional relation of the images of the neighboring identical patterns is corrected, based on the detected positional information (note col. 6 lines 52-53, fixed amount two dimensionally in peripheral directions); and

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Comparing the images the positional relation of which has been corrected based on the quantity of correction, wherein the quantity of correction is determined based on the information containing the positions of the images at multiple separate places in the pattern (note col.5 lines 50-52 and col. 6 lines 50-55).

Regarding claims 2, 5, 9 and 12 Onishi discloses,

Wherein multiple separate places include the vicinities of both ends in the pattern arrangement to be inspected (note col. 5 lines 10-12 and 20-26 and fig. 2, examiner interprets as operating set areas of repetitive patterns for inspection).

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 15-17 are allowed.
4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance for independent claim 15. The prior art fails to disclose all the features of pattern inspection apparatus comprising an image capture section, image storage section, positional information detection section, correction quality determining section, pattern comparison section and cell comparison section. Claims 16-17 depend on claim 15. Therefore are also allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

5. Claims 3, 6-7, 10 and 13-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The claims further limit when each step is performed. Detection of positional information, determination of quantity correction and comparison of images are carried out in parallel. Also determination of quantity correction and comparison of images are started after the capture of the images of images of two neighboring patterns is completed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gregory M. Desire whose telephone number is (571) 272-7449. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (6:30-3:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen Lillis can be reached on (571) 272-6928. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

G.D.
August 4, 2007

GREGORY DESIRE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

